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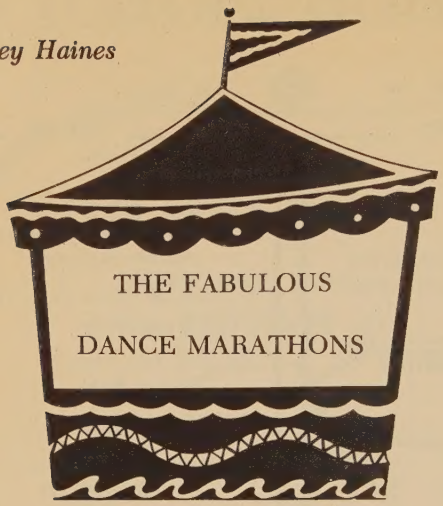
By Aubrey Haines



In the 1920's the latest novelty in American amusements was the dance marathon. The New York daily newspapers in 1928 carried accounts of a dancing marathon in Atlantic City, one in Pittsburgh (until stopped by the police), and two in New York: one for white couples in Madison Square Garden and another for Negroes farther uptown. Besides these there were many others throughout America.

"In a day of varied and curious championships," the *Nation* observed editorially, "we do not see why the ability to dance down all rivals is not as worthy of honor and profit as most of our other competitions—including that to be the richest man in the United States or even to be its President."

The usual method of conducting these marathons was to allow fifteen minutes of rest at the end of each hour of dancing and let the contestants compete if it took all summer. Interest in the Madison Square Garden marathon was mild until it had continued a week and a majority of the original ninety-one couples had fallen asleep and been disqualified. Then dramatic incidents began to occur.

Vera Campbell, a girl of powerful build, had for several days been putting new life into her drooping partner, Dave Auerbach, by kicking his feet, ankles, and shins at critical times. On the ninth day her own feet were in such condition that they could no longer bring her partner to life. Hence she took to punching him on the chin and the side of the face when she noticed his getting into a torpor.

The only girl on the floor who avoided foot trouble was Mary Promitis of Pittsburgh. One of her friends told her that the old bare-knuckle prize fighters used to pickle their hands in brine and vinegar to toughen them for a fight. He believed that what was good for a bare-knuckle fighter's fist would be good for a dance competitor's feet. Pickling her feet in brine and vinegar for three weeks, Miss Promitis vindicated her friend's suggestion.

On the same day of the marathon Helen Schmidt landed several right blows on the jaw of her partner, Joseph Tartore. They were Couple Sixteen. Tartore's instructions to his partner were to strike his jaw if he showed signs of unsteadiness or of trying to quit the contest. Following his suggestion, the girl repeatedly revived the sinking Tartoer with sharp right blows to the face. Nevertheless, her partner slipped to the floor at about four o'clock one morning. He was pulled to his feet, and the girl braced him up temporarily with strong doses of the usual tonic. Finally, however, he became inert, the sharpest blows did him no good, and the team was eliminated.

It was not left to the women to practice all the pugilism. On the tenth day of the marathon Dominick Laperte of Couple Thirty-seven blackened the eye of his partner, Charlotte Kush of Johnstown, Pennsylvania, in a quick battle. Dominick had developed a stalling technic of his own in which he would lean against the bandstand and support himself while pretending to dance. Fearing that he would be disqualified for this, his partner—after pleading in vain—stamped on his toes and slapped him. Laperte encountered with an accurately-driven blow to the eye. "You're no gentleman," said Miss Kush. "I suspected it before." Keeping his apologizing abjectly during two rest periods, she finally pardoned him on his promise not to forget what was due her.

On the same day some couples began to see visions. Mortimer began to complain that large sums of money were stolen from his tent. A legion of pickpockets and thieves pursued him. His partner had dispelled previous hallucinations by short blows to the face and neck. In the late afternoon, however, he broke away from her and raced out of the arena in pursuit of a pickpocket. Several men restrained him as he sought to attack an attendant. He was disqualified for leaving the arena.

The experience of Couple Forty-five was more tragic. Olive Goss of New York, after gazing steadily for nearly ten days on the face of Alois Bruhin, began to push it out of her line of vision. For hours she kept turning it to the right and to the left. Bruhin, a rather handsome young man, slowly grew angry at the repeated hints that his face was obnoxious. The girl, growing more vehement, began to scream with pain every time his countenance recorded itself on her retina. She finally collapsed, and the couple was eliminated after dancing 206 hours, twenty-five minutes.

To the sporadic attendant at dance marathons, however, nothing so dramatic occurred. They were as dull as a six-day bicycle race. The couples did not even dance—except occasionally. Mostly they just walked around the floor and often stopped to take a drink, to chat with friends among the spectators, or to have a facial mas-

sage or a shampoo. At such times they merely shifted their weight from one foot to another so as not to be declared out of the contest.

Dancing dervishes of the Near East, who gained world-wide reputation by whirling until they collapsed, were put into total eclipse by devotees of the marathons which spread over England, France, and America in the 1920's and 1930's. Religious ecstasy inspired the whirling dervishes. Only the desire for pre-eminence and perhaps lucrative vaudveille contracts inspired the twentieth-century dancers.

When, in 1923, a Cleveland girl reached a record of ninety hours, ten minutes of continuous dancing, a New York dancing academy immediately announced a six-day dancing contest. Both Paris and London were expected to rise to the challenge. "Of all the crazy competitions ever invented," the New York *Evening World* remarked, "the dancing marathon wins by a considerable margin of lunacy. If the authorities are anxious to find legal grounds for stopping such exhibitions, the statutes in regard to the care of lunatics would seem obviously applicable."

Such a viewpoint, however, was not taken by other editorial observers who witnessed with enthusiasm the then new phenomenon. "On with the dance!" cheerfully advised the New York *Tribune*. The editor found something human in the marathon. "The young men and women who seek the bubble reputation even at the saxophone's mouth, seem determined to die dancing if they can," he observed. "Dancing, long a religious rite and now a social necessity, must run its course. While burglars continue to climb porches and footpads to wield their blackjacks, the police could be more usefully employed than chasing the marathon dancers from one State to another."

The editor's reference to the police applied to an especially lively marathon dance which made Miss Vera Sheppard of Long Island City temporarily the world's champion nonstop dancer in the spring of 1923, with sixty-nine hours to her credit. The nineteen-year-old girl said that she could have made it an even seventy-five hours. But the police decided that what was not good enough for New York and New Jersey certainly should not be permitted in Connecticut, and they ordered her to leave the floor of the East Port Chester Cygnet Athletic Club. Chief Justice Nedley, however, extended the time to allow Miss Sheppard to make the even sixty-nine-hour record. She hd abegun at New York's Audubon Ballroom and broke the Cleveland record established the day before by almost three hours. Ordered to move, she had danced in three States, two halls, a private parlor, four times in a moving van, and on a ferry boat.

By the time that she quit, she was an extremely tired girl in a worn bathrobe and dingy white stockings in rolls about scuffling felt slippers. Her eyes half shut, her arms hung over her partner's shoulders, she dragged aching feet that seem glued to the floor in one short, agonizing step after another. Nonstop dancing contests were banned in the large Pacific Coast cities, according to authorities in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Portland, Seattle, and Tacoma. The Detroit City Council also adopted a resolution against such affairs.

Opinions differed as to how Miss Sheppard maintained her sixyt-nine-hour record. Some of her co-workers said that it was because she did not smoke and was abstemious in eating and drinking throughout the contest. Her sister Mary, who was with her throughout the entire time, said, "Vera has prayed every night."

Miss Sheppard herself said, with a quick lift of her head: "I'm Irish. Do you suppost that I could have stuck it out otherwise?" For two days the record stood, then a new world's nonstop record was made by Miss June Curry of Cleveland, with ninety hours, ten minutes of continuous dancing to her credit.

It was noteworthy that in 1923 practically all of the endurance records were held by women. A critic accounted for this by the fact that the girls were assisted around by a succession of strong partners, while the men had to depend on their own legs. In the case of a very tired and light dancer a strong partner could easily carry her around, it was pointed out, merely by allowing her feet to touch the floor at appropriate intervals. By following some such method as this, it appeared, a tired girl dancer might even sleep, like the frigate bird, on the wing.

The New York *Tribune* editor concluded: "Among all the laws designed to stop things, one can probably be hunted up to control the epidemic of marathon dancing if the craze grows menacing. It is quite contagious. No sooner does a young woman in New York beat the long-distance record than another in Cleveland adds a few hours to it, and the toughest-fibered young people of a dozen other cities immediately take the floor to better the new mark, while loafers of inferior leg power, gratified to find a new way of killing time, actually pay to look on."

To many people the dance marathon was a manifestation of *dementia Americana* of no particular importance. But to social workers concerned with protective measures for young grils, the spread and popularity of this extraordinary form of amusement occasioned considerable anxiety. Indeed this was so much the case that the Girls' Protective Council chairman, Ruth Roberts Mix of New Haven, studied the development and collected material on its social-hygiene aspects for possible discussion at the National Conference of Social Work in Kansas City.

There were more of these marathons than most people realized, and the morbid interest they attracted grew rather than diminished. Communities generally did not object to them since they brought financial returns. The marathons ran continuously anywhere from one to six months. The girl partciipants were not only recrutied locally but followed the marathons from place to place, exposed to all sorts of physical and emotional excitement and demoralizing influences. From her observation in New England Mrs. Mix said: "Couples who win favor are showered with money called a 'spray,' often as much as $30 or $40 a night. Many girls receive gifts of clothing, jewelry, and even money from marathon fans. The girls frankly say that the two partners take turns sleeping, literally carrying each other while continuing to shuffle along. When a girl becomes a favorite with an audience, the management often arranges a solo act for her and her partner, crooning perhaps, or broadcast-

ing her impressions of the marathon—with her feet moving all the time, of course."

In *The Deserted Village* the pictures of rustic merrymaking include

"The dancing pair that simply sought renown,
By holding out to tire each other down."

Hence the dancing marathon was not new. Goldsmith gave no inkling of the relative endurance of the sexes. An interesting fact about these marathons was the superior grit and staying power of the female contenders. They commonly tired out six male partners in the exhausting shuffle.

If such tests of stamina as the marathon dancers engaged in were exacted as punishment, they would have been deemed cruel. The treadmill was abandoned as too harsh, yet the prisoner was obliged to tread no more than six hours a day in fifteen-minute periods, with intervals of rest. The dancers kept in motion for fifty hours or more at a time. Toronto—beyond the reach of the stop-the-dance-laws—was suggested as the place for a 100-hour marathon by Miss Alma Cummings, one of the earlier champions.

Dr. Cummins, head surgeon of the United States Health Service, traced the descent of the twentieth-century dancing marathon from the Middle Ages. In London 500 years ago, he said, crowds began dancing, whirling around four or five days at a time without stopping, until they fell from exhaustion and many died. The first death from the craze in the 1920's was reported from North Tonawanda, New York. Homer Morehouse, twenty-seven, dropped dead as he walked off the dance floor with his partner after completing eighty-seven hours of continuous dancing. Physicians attributed death to heart failure.

The dancing marathons had the effect of turning the attention of the public once again to the dance hall, the New York *Herald* observed. Boston would not be invaded by the mania, the Boston *Evening Transcript* announced. "To a certain level of intelligence," the *Transcript* concluded, "there is apparently amusement in watching a young man's or a young woman's going through the steps of a modern dance hour after hour while musicians and partners work in relays and pauses are made from time to time so that the dancer may change shoes whose soles have disappeared for shoes that are whole. But it is not wholesome amusement. These contests are likely to cause overexertion on the part of many persons who are poorly equipped for trials of endurance. Long-distance dancing does not come within the scope of those tests of skill and strength that serve a useful purpose. It is a good thing that the craze will receive no official sanction here."

The New York *American* pointed out: "Some animals exhibit this craze for dancing. One is the dancing or whirling mouse, which spins around with incredible speed until it drops, a state of affairs caused by a diseased condition of the brain."

◆

UGO DALL'ARA AND HIS BALLET GROUP GIVE REBIRTH TO THE NATIONAL ART OF DANCE

by Trudy Goth

Ugo Dall'Ara proved to be a very enterprising man when he decided, only two years after the failure of the first Italian traveling dance company, to organize a new ballet group aiming at presenting itself in many Italian towns and at giving foreign countries an idea on the most recent achievements of Italian ballet art. As a dancer, Dall'Ara has had a long experience with the Scala Theatre in Milan where he also worked in the quality of scenographer. On the other hand, the support of Dr. Alberto Cappelli, Superintendent of the Bologna Communal Theatre, enables this new founded company insert its performances within the frame of various other theatres' programs.

The debut of the Compagnia Italiana del Balletto was successful indeed. The performance, which scheduled many different ballet styles resulted quite varied and original.

Concerning the dancers, Olga Amati's outstanding performance in "Les Sylphides," Giuliana Barabaschi's forceful expressions, Paolo Bortoluzzi's efficient participatoin and Riccardo Duse's rhythmical sensitiveness. Moreover several excellent soloists and well-trained and regulated corp de ballet made last night performance a success. From the very beginning, when they appeared in "Les Sylphides," warm applauses cheered the proficient dancers. The audience was deeply impressed with the sensible approach to the subject and the perfectly concurrent execution of the ballerinas.

The "Mask and the Red Death," adapted from E. A. Poe's tale, came next, to the music of Giampiero Tintori.

The tale of the prince, caught by plague, "the red death," while he is taking part in a masquerade which he himself organized in his castle to entertain his guests, gave rise to an elaborate number of different plays within the play, which included drolleries, as well as dexterous performances of jokers and rope dancers. The adroitness and capability of the perfromers of these

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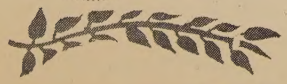

Membership Chairman: Leona Lucus
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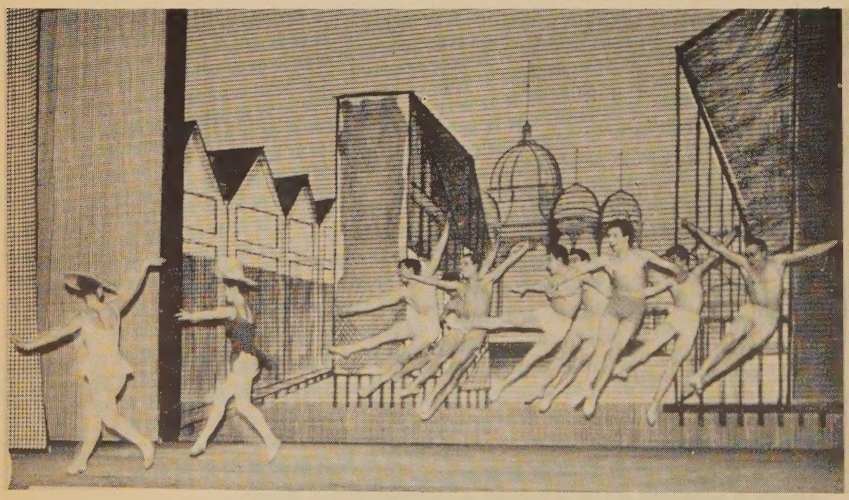
various sketches and of Giuliana Barabaschi playing the role of "the Death" and Riccardo Duse as "the Prince," helped in making this ballet a triumph. Personal applauses went to Olga Amati for her performance in the "Waltz," to A. Daviso and Riccardo Duse who danced the "Mazurka," to Giuliana Barabaschi for her interpretation in the "Prelude" and to Olga Amati coupled with Riccardo Duse in the execution of the "Pass de Deux."

The second part of the spectacle included two pieces of a more modern style: "The Last Don Juan" and the above mentioned "Honeymoon Trip."



The "Don Juan" whom we met wears blue-jeans and T-shirt, intrigues among iron cages and spotlights, has become a thief and is nothing more than a plebeian. Thus, this "Last Don Juan" ends the series of the imperishable lover's stories, wihtout beauty, still in perfect damnation.

The subject matter apparently fascinated Ugo Dall'Ara, while Frank Martin's score stimulated his creativeness by its workable and mimical possibilities. Though remote from the traditional Mozart's melodrama and Gluck's ballet to which we are accustomed, this Don Juan, pressed by the suggestive rhythm of this symphonic composition, played successfully his role and hit the target, which was widely demonstrated by the immediate and warm response on the part of the audience.

Well supported by Frank Martin's forcefully expressive and lyrical score, the dancers of the Compagnia Italiana del Balletto, mostly contributed to this successful performance.

First dancer, Paolo Bortoluzzi, and Misses Ambrosio, Daviso, Micheli, Odoli and Riccaboni, as solo-ists, displayed great talent and elegance in giving life to this choreographic Don Juan.

The outstanding performance of the newly founded company moved the audience to rewarding applause.

The choreographic farce, "Honeymoon Trip," appeared to be attractive and noteworthy. The well-chosen subject matter of this ballet profits very much by the skilled musical setting of M. O. Gervasio, who succeeded in adapting to it a lively, colorful and perfectly match-

ing score. A few burlesque scenes parody today's youth rage for odd dances, for summer-beach-beauty contests, in contrast to the loving, anxious and ever-lasting sentimentality of the newlyweds who, despite the troubles they have to face, succeed in preserving their romance. The very simpleness of their love helps them in defeating the odd eccentricities of the most agitated youngsters fond of too many and different neoterisms.

It was, as noted above, a tasty and pungent story, skillfully enlivened by a clean-cut score in which clearness, rhythm and instrumentality properly coped the ironical annotations by the orchestra and timbres. It deserved the great success it obtained. All the performers were excellent and worthy of the highest praises, from the star dancers Giuliana Barabaschi, Olga Amato, and Antonietta Daviso, to Fernandez, Odoli and Pieraboni, and to the corp-de-ballet on its whole. Riccardo Duse and Paolo Bortoluzzi displayed unusual capacity.

All the Compagnia del Balletto Italiano needs is to enrich its repertory, to acquire more "routine" and to find some consistent economic support to be able to prevail and affirm itself in the world of dance.

◆

DID YOU KNOW?

by Homer Babb
(Part One)

. . . That, JAMES CAGNEY once owned and operated a successful dancing school in New Jersey. MR. CAGNEY, winner of Academy Awards, attributes his success to his many years as a tap dancer before the footlights. . . . BILL ROBINSON, the great colored tap dancer, could run backward faster than most people could run forward. He never smoked, never took a drink, but consumed at least one quart of vanilla ice cream daily. . . . ELEANOR POWELL, precision tap dancers of the movies, suddenly quit dancing to devote her full time to religious work among children. . . . GEORGE RAFT, well-known tough guy of films and TV, studied ballet and was once a professional dancer before he entered pictures. . . . PAT ROONEY, now past 80 years of age, is still a dancing star on Broadway—just another example of the wonderful things dancing can do for a person. Many well-known colleges include ballet training for their football and basketball squads. . . . SUGAR RAY ROBINSON is a very talented tap dancer and has appeared many times on the ED SULLIVAN show and was featured with GENE KELLY on a special Omnibus program, "Dancing Is a Man's Game." . . . PEG LEG BATES, sensational tap dancing star of "Ken Murray's Blackouts" has one leg amputated and uses a wooden peg leg to do his most amazing dancing. . . . FRED ASTAIRE, although past 60 years of age, won 9 TV Emmy Awards for his wonderful TV show "A Night With Fred Astaire," proving that dancing has no age limit.

LONDON'S ROYAL BALLET IN NEW YORK

Eighty-four artists of Britain's Royal Ballet from The Royal Opera House, Convent Garden, London, arrived by chartered BOAC plane at Idylwild Airport Sept. 6 for the gala four-week season at the Metropolitan Opera House which began Sept. 11. The Royal Ballet is presented here byl S. Hurok.

The troupe, headed by such ballerinas as Dame Margot Fonteyn, Nadia Nerina, Svetlana Beriosova, and Annette Page, was preceded by some 24 tons of scenery and costumes, including those for the elaborate Royal Ballet full-length productions of "The Sleeping Beauty," "Swan Lake," "La Fille Mal Gardee," "Ondine" and "Giselle." Technicians and the Royal Ballet's director, Dame Ninette de Valois, also preceded the company to New York.

The opening of 'The Sleeping Beauty" was virtually sold-out for the entire run with more than a half-million dollars in the box-office. Following the final New York performance on October 9, the Royal Ballet began a coast-to-coast tour which will take it to 25 U. S. and Canadian cities including East Lansing, Cleveland, St. Louis, Denver, Seattle, Vancouver, Portland, San Francisco, Sacramento, Los Angeles, San Diego, Houston, New Orleans, Birmingham, Atlanta, Washington, Chicago, Rochester, Detroit, Toronto, Montreal, Burlington, Boston, Philadelphia, and Baltimore. The final North American performance will take place in Philadelphia on January 29.

News Briefs

• San Francisco Ballet's Lew Christensen directed the dance portion of the Pacific Festival of Fine Arts held in September in San Francisco. Michael Smuin did the choreography. . . . The San Francisco Ballet Guild held a Christian Diors fashion show for the benefit of the San Francisco Ballet. Michael Smuin choreographed a satire on women of fashion. . . . Also by Smuin, at the request of Lew Christensen, is a ballet titled "Gold Rush" which will be a part of San Francisco's annual "Folderol" show. It's at this time each year that stars from the opera, symphony and ballet contribute their talents to help make up the deficit of the opera season. The theme this year will be "Girl of the Golden West." Christensen will present "Beauty and the Beast."

• Juanita Arno, Arizona dance teacher, flew to Hawaii to teach for Peggy Ryan, former dance partner of Donald O'Connor. Miss Ryan has her own studio at the Ryoal Hawaiian Hotel.

• Byrnes & Swanson presented the famous ballroom champions, McGregor & Bemil at their New York studio on September 18th and 23rd. The team also gave instruction to a special group on September 25th at the Byrnes & Swanson studio.

• After a quarter of a century in one location, Arita Lee Blair opened a new and enlarged studio in downtown Meadville, Pa., the weekend after Labor Day. To celebrate the occasion, she awarded ten free scholarships to wards of a Children's Home and Associated Charities in the community. Arita Lee served as principal of the Teachers Training school at the D. M. of A. convention at Miami Beach.

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• Teresa Montefusco, 1958-59 National A.A.U. Women's Tumbling champion and former dance student of Rose Dentino is, at this writing, in Rome, Italy as a member of the United States Women's Gymnastic Olympic team.

• A new work by Danny Joal is presently being choreographed for the Shirley Broughton Dance Company. Louanna Gardner, who has recently joined the company, will be the soloist. Other dancers appearing in the work are Shirlev Broughton, Robert du Mee and Lois Rosner. It will receive its premiere performance at the Cooper Union on October 31st when the company is scheduled to appear there in a full evening of dance works.

• The Shirley Broughton Modern Ballet Company has scheduled a concert October 21st at the Cooper Union in New York City.

Two new works will receive their premiere performances: "The Moth" – Danny Joel – Imbrie and "Etudes" – Shirley Broughton. The program will also include "Parlor Game"–Marvin Gordon–W. Dorsey Stuart. Guest artist for the evening will be Ethel Winter appearing in two of her solo numbers: "En Dolor"–De Falla and a new work.

On October 23rd at 8:30 the company will appear, as guest performers on the Robert du Mée and Company program at the 92nd Street and Lexington Avenue Y. They will repeat "Etudes" and "Parlor Game."

Dancers in the company are: Robert du Mée, Louanna Gardner, Danny Joel, Rebecca Oliver, Lois Rosner and Miss Broughton.

EVER WONDERED HOW DANCERS GET THOSE JOBS ON "DANCING COMMERCIALS"? THEN READ: "THE CHAMPIONS" IN THE NOVEMBER DANCE DIGEST.

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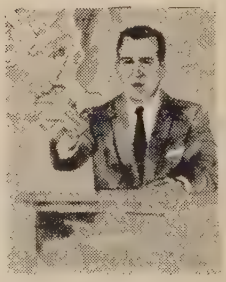

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Speech-making, like writing, is communication. There are rules to be followed. These rules have been worked out through experience. Let's find out what they are.

Maybe you're nervous about getting up to face an audience. Stop to figure out why you feel that way. Basically, you're afraid. Afraid you'll make a poor impression? Afraid you won't make good sense?

Well, get used to the feeling! Nervousness will stay with you . . . it *should* stay with you. It's a sign of your respect for the audience. Lose it, and you become a sloppy performer. The same holds true for actor or dancer.

Learn to control your nerves. According to Charles A. Dwyer, author of the Alexander Hamilton Institute Report, "How to Make a Public Speech," the nervous speaker can do this in three ways.

First, practice before audiences will give him confidence. Each performance will be easier than the last one.

Second, practice in private will improve control of gestures and voice.

Third, the nervous speaker should remember that thousands of others have "suffered" the same way. And they've all lived through the experience!

Most people are afraid of forgetting the things they intend to say. A card with your speech *outline* on it is an old and reliable guide.

Does this suddenly give you hope? Have you remembered that speeches can be read from a prepared manuscript?

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to stand there and just read it to your audience. This is comparable to performing a dance routine while looking at notes. You'll lose them to more engrossing pastimes . . . like counting light bulbs in the auditorium, or criticizing the cut of your suit.

Your audience doesn't want to be read to. Or talked at. Those are *people* out front! Talk *to* them.

The technique to use here is read and re-read your speech. Become the master of every thought, every phrase. Practice your gestures, your tone of voice.

Then deliver the speech *almost* from memory! Keep the manuscript merely as a guide and reminder.

Professor Dwyer says the extemporaneous speaker has an advantage. He talks more naturally. He is free to adapt his thoughts to circumstances.

If you're called upon to speak without preparation—you have to think on your feet. No speaker can do his best without preparation, says Professor Dwyer. The impromptu speech should be reserved for emergencies.

Fluency of speech is not necessarily a gift. Here are a few exercises to help you gain it.

Pick up your daily newspaper. Read aloud one short news item. Put the paper down and re-tell that story in your own words. Try the same procedure with a business report.

What you accomplish is a broader use of language. You learn to take ideas and recreate them.

In preparation—establish the *goal* of your speech. Then put into it only what will serve your purpose. Don't ramble on irrelevently.

Jot down pertinent quotations, anecdotes, human interest items. Search your own mind and library for these.

Get ideas from other people who've lived with this subject. Add their experiences to your store of information. Gather material from books, magazines, newspapers, company literature.

This research will net you a grab-bag of facts and data. Select *now* the strongest, newest and most colorful items.

Inject personality stories because audiences want to hear about other people. Deft strokes of humor relieve tension and convey a point you want to make.

A suggestion by Professor Dwyer is to cite authorities known to the audience and respected by them.

Successful speakers have used a variety of openers for their speeches. Make a startling statement to stab the audience's attention. Or start by telling a story. One method is to ask your audience a question—involve them in the theme of the talk.

To end your speech, re-state your main points. Tie them in a neat bundle for the audience to carry away.

Friendliness and enthusiasm are twin horses for your chariot in reaching your listeners' mind and heart. Look and act as if you're pleased to face this group.

To add it all up—have something important to say . . . prepare carefully—deliver your talk convincingly, sincerely.

You'll probably get such a "kick" out of your experience—you'll hardly be able to wait for your next speaking invitation.

James M. Jenks,
Alexander Hamilton Institute

PUBLICITY—THE KIND EVERY DANCE TEACHER DREAMS ABOUT RECEIVING

Perhaps every dance teacher in the profession has at one time or another literally dreamed of receiving large scale national recognition for the efforts he or she has expended on talented dance students. But few, sadly enough, experience this satisfaction. One reason for this lack of recognition relative to teacher and student is the fact that too many students, either through thoughtlessness or deliberate oversight, fail to credit their dance teacher for the important part they played in helping to pave the way toward their ultimate success.

An outstanding exception to this rule is Annette Funicello (of Mousketeer fame) and a former student of Al Gilbert. For a real success story be sure to pick up a copy of Dell Publishing company's "Annette's Life Story" dated May-July, 1960. In this comic style magazine done in a serious vein, Annette wholeheartedly gives credit to her teacher, Al Gilbert, for the important part he played in helping her to get started professionally. There are a number of drawings showing Al Gilbert in his studio as well as talking to Annette.

It would be this writer's guess that circulation figures of this magazine run into several hundred thousand copies. Not bad publicity for a hard working dance teacher—and the type you couldn't buy. But none of this would have been possible if Annette Funicello had not taken the time and effort to include Al Gilbert as a part of her "life story." This young lady is to be commended for her sincere thoughtfulness of others and the part they played in helping her toward success.

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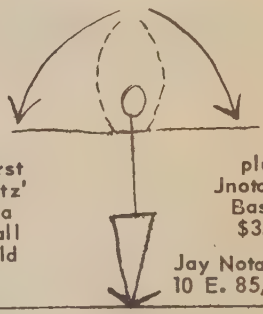

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Leroy H. Thayer, Secretary

226 North Division Street, Salisbury, Maryland

DANCE MASTERS of AMERICA (Oklahoma) held a Fall Material Session at the Kotche School of Dancing in Oklahoma City, Sept. 11th. Faculty included: Ana Jean Lancaster's School, Modern Jazz; Helen Overpeck, Tap; Betty Jane Wilkins, Ballet; Charlotte Conaster's School, Ballroom; and Jim & Carol Ann Crowell, Ballroom.

Dear Editor:

Enclosed please find a recent photo of Sherry O'Neil, also some clips on her to substantiate my remarks about her in the enclosed article entitled, "As I See It."

Mr. Ernest Belcher, the dancing master mentioned in my article, was so wonderful with **the children that I've always felt he should** receive a share of the plaudits too. I've never seen anyone to surpass him any place, including New York where my own daughter studied for several years.

Very sincerely yours,

PENNY DURBIN

EDITOR'S NOTE: If you have a daughter in dancing school you will appreciate the writer's sincerity in telling the story which follows.

AS I SEE IT

by Penny Durbin

Fine ingredients and a deft hand plus a touch of artistry are requisite in the creation of a blue ribbon winning cake. The cake is carefully planned, put together, and artistically finished just right in order to win the prize.

Maria Tallchief, scintillating dancing star of the ballet world, was born with all the fine ingredients necessary to the making of a prima ballerina. Even as a little girl, Maria had speed and dash in her pirouettes. She was always one of the outstanding dancers in her class, and she progressed rapidly. The deft hand plus the touch of artistry was supplied by her great ballet master, Ernest Belcher. And the careful planning was afforded by Maria's mother, whose patient efforts in her daughter's behalf were untiring and determined.

It's not so easy to be a stage mother as many people like to believe. Along with Mrs. Tallchief, we mothers got a terrific workout, sitting on those hard benches at Ernest Belcher's Studio of the Dance on Western Avenue at Sixth Street in Los Angeles over a long period of years. In fact, we actually

Sherry O'Neil

worked up a sweat sitting there straining our flacid muscles along with our potential ballerinas, who were struggling to gain mastery over all those difficult steps and combinations.

How our hearts ached for their blistered and sometimes bleeding toes. But still they danced, paying no attention to their feet. As mothers we became familiar with the French terms so that we could coach our small ballerina's practice periods between their daily lessons We even got so we could do some of the steps ourselves—after a fashion, of course. We were permitted to use one of the halls for practicing. We practically lived at Belcher's for several years.

Our husbands have had the patience of Job—waiting for us to some home and cook dinner. It's a wonder they didn't divorce us. Those little ballerinas were all members of a special class for outstanding dancers claled the professional class. And their dads were proud of them too.

Several famous dancing stars

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were created in those classes at Belcher's.

Maria Tallchief everyone knows from her brilliant performances with the Ballet Theatre and the Ballet Russe.

Marge Champion, the feminine half of that famous dancing team, Marge and Gower Champion, was another one of those little ballerinas.

Gwen Verdun is another with whom everyone is familiar. She starred in the dancing roll of Lola in the Broadway musical, "Damn Yankees," and is currently starring in the hit musical, "Red Head."

And last but not least that delightful young blonde newcomer, Sherry O'Neil, whom everyone will soon know, because she has been signed by Screen Gems to do a T.V. series with Eleanor Donahue, entitled "Calling Miss Peters." Sherry O'Neil, a singing, dancing comedienne has been doing leads in summer musicals in the East for the past two seasons. Recently, she added directing to her list of accomplishments, when she directed "Annie Get Your Gun," starring Ginger Rogers, at the Packard Music Hall in Warren, Ohio.

Sherry, whose accomplishments include that of director, actress, singer, dancer, is a triple threat on any stage. This fall she will go to Honolulu for the first industrial show for our new state.

Thus we see that fine ingredients, a deft hand plus a touch of artistry, and careful planning not only make a blue ribbon winning cake, it's the way dancing stars are made too.

And hats off to Mr. Belcher, who did such a fine job of training so many stars.

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CHILD PRODIGY

by Lyn Dellis

As a child I took up dancing

Toe—ballet,—boy did I prance.

As an adult, you should see me

Do you know? ... I still can't dance!

LYNN SEYMOUR, CANADIAN BALERINA OF ROYAL BALLET, ARRIVES FOR U. S. DEBUT WITH COMPANY

Lynn Seymour, Canadian - born soloist of The Royal Ballet, arrived from London September 19 to make her U. S. debut with the famous British company which is currently performing at the Metropolitan Opera. Miss Seymour, who is a native of Vancouver, B. C., will be seen in the role of the Fiancee in "Le Baiser de la Fee," which will have its U. S. premiere next Tuesday, September 27.

This is the only role Miss Seymour will dance in New York, and, following the final performance of the new ballet on Saturday, October 1, she returned to England to dance with the alternate company at Convent Garden.

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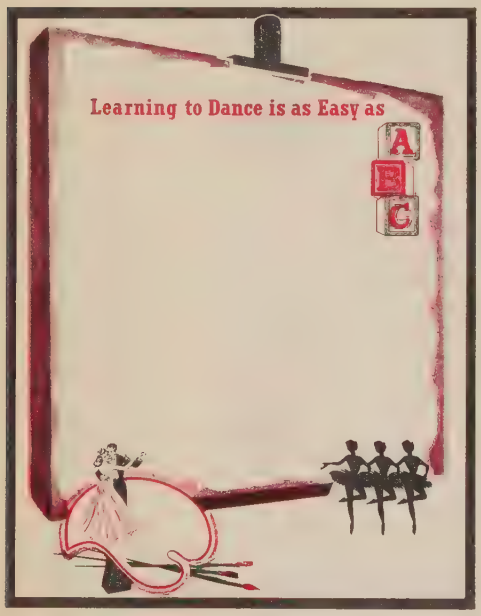
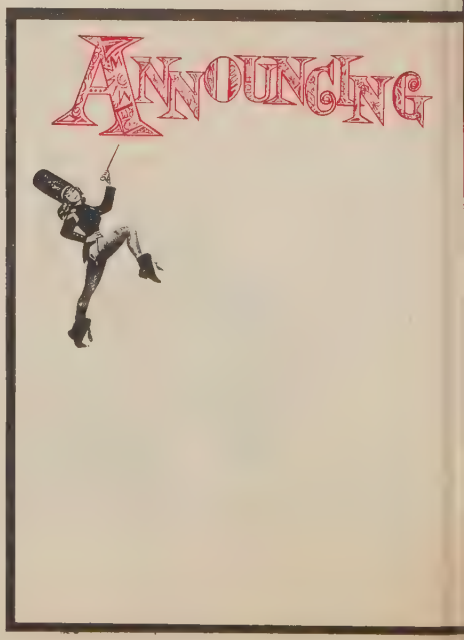


DB-2 Special Dance Bulletin

AN-2 Announcing—Ballerina

AN-1 Announcing—Majorette



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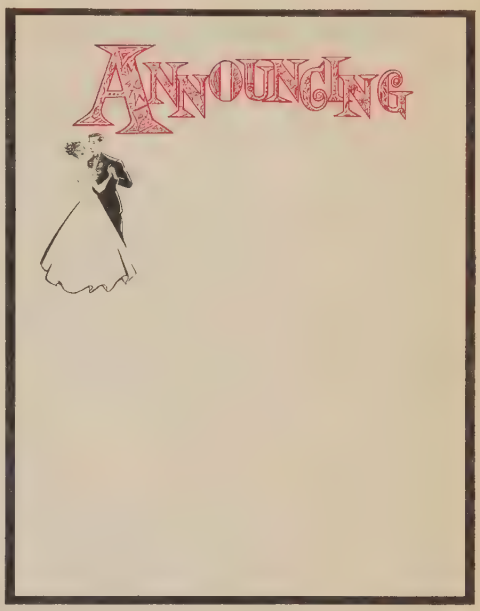
DB-1 Dance School Bulletin Board

AN-3 Announcing—Ballroom Couple



PB-4 Party Bulletin

XL-1 Season's Greetings

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Dear

This is to let you know that your _____ (Subject) lesson will be on _____ (Day) _____ (Date) at _____ (Time).

We are looking forward to seeing you then. However, if you are unable to attend your lesson please notify the studio in advance. Thank you.

Dancingly yours,

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This is to let you know that _____ (Name) dance lesson schedule will be as follows:

(Subject)	(Day)	(Date)	(Time)
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

We are looking forward to seeing (him/her) at this time. However, if (he/she) is unable to attend the lesson please notify the studio in advance. Thank you.

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SLC-1 Lesson Time Schedule

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Our Readers Write

Dear Mr. Keith:

Chairman Biddick has asked me to thank you for your very helpful letter of June 23. The Committee hopes to reach a solution that will result in protection of the public without penalizing the legitimate operators in this field, and the views of legitimate organizations like yours are invaluable in reaching this goal.

In the near future we expect ot have legislation drafted for discussion purposes. Yuo will be sent a copy, and your comments and suggestions will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

JAN STEVENS
Counsel

Dear Editor:

Concerning the statement by one of your readers in the last issue of the Dance Digest that the spelling R-h-u-m-b-a is inaccurate in my advertising. May I refer the learned dhoctor to Whebster's new Collegiate Dictionary, 2nd edition, copyright 1958, page 728 where he will find:

Quote—"Rhumba—var. (variation) of rumba." Then on page 740 of the same edtiion where it has: Quote—"Rumba—a cuban negro dance or U.S. imitation of it." Then he might also check Whebster's New World Dictionary, Encyclopedic edition, copyright 1951, page 1246, where it stated:

Quote—"Rhumba—n. a rumba"
And page 1270:

INTERESTED IN A THEATRICAL CAREER? THEN DON'T MISS "THE CHAMPIONS" COMING IN THE NOVEMBER ISSUE OF DANCE DIGEST.

Quote—Rumba—1. a dance of cuban negro origin and complex rhythm. 2. A modern ballroom adaptation of this, characterized by emphasized rhythmic movements of the lower part of the body. 3. Music for or in the rhythm of this dance. Also spelled Rhumba."

In checking advertising material for various dance studios throughout the country as well as phonograph records and literature on ballroom dancing I find the spelling about equally divided between Rumba and Rhumba.

In closing, if it will not disturb the eminent dhoctor too much, I will continue to use the small h in R-h-u-m-b-a.

Sincerely yours,

WILLIAM D'ALBREW
San Francisco

Dear Editor:

All of those connected with the ballroom dance business are vitally interested in anything that will spark a new boom in this field. I have heard numerous arguments, analysis, and suggestions pertaining to this subject, and have decided to enter the arena by submitting my own thoughts. For every ballroom operating two or three nights a week, there are about thirty bowling alleys operating seven nights a week and ten golf courses going strong. Why are activities such as golf, bowling, and bridge flourishing while bands and ballrooms are on the decline? There are numerous suggestions for correcting this situation, but in this article I will concentrate on the part the bands can play, for I feel they can play the major role in reversing this trend. If I can convince them of the logic and validity of my arguments, I am sure that they will cooperate eagerly. By playing concrete type, non-beat, un-danceable music, and by catering to the poorer un-

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skilled dancer, they have unknowingly and unintentionally lowered the dance standards of the American public to the point where most people aren't skilled enough in dancing to enjoy it. I hope that this magazine will stimulate argument and debate and thus lead to a definite, constructive program. Why spend money on advertising to get people back into the ballrooms only to lose them again?

My primary suggestion to the bands is this: BANDS SHOULD ANNOUNCE AND PLAY ONE LATIN NUMBER IN EACH SET. Very simple, wouldn't you say? I wish I could talk the bands into trying this for one year—I am convinced that the worst that could result is that business would double. However, in my conversations with musicians, the usual reply to this suggestion is, "We can't play all that 'fancy stuff' until there is more demand for it. Our regular customers would complain." Musicians feel that they must continue to play almost 100% of their music for the untrained dancer, who goes out dancing infrequently. It should be the opposite; unless instructed not to, they should include at least one rumba, samba, mambo, cha cha, tango and merengue. Many bands refuse to play any Latin unless the demand is very strong, and then they hope that most of the dancers will leave the floor so they can say, "See, I told you so." Frequently the majority of those dancing do leave the floor. The reason this happens is that the trained, more enthusiastic dancers, who would have enjoyed the Latin music, knowing the reputation of that particular orchestra, stayed away from the dance.

Bands that hesitate to play Latin for fear of provoking or antagonizing their established customers and clientele will please note that I am not even advocating a full set of Latin, only one Latin number at the beginning or ending of each set. This would be enough Latin music to saitsfy the many people who are taking Latin dancing lessons and to stimulate those interested in improving their dancing, but not so much Latin as to antagonize those who are dead set against change or progress. By catering to the poorer dancers, who rarely go dancing anyway, the bands have lost the interest and patronage of the trained dancers and students who would go dancing often, if only they could find bands who played a variety of danceable Latin and American music.

The next logical question is, "How can the addition of one Latin number to each set magically and suddenly create a 'boom' in the dance business?" To begin with, I have noticed that people who decide to take dancing lessons usually choose to start with the Latin dances. Why? For no other reason than that the Fox Trot and Waltz are danced so poorly by the great majority of the people, that prospective students don't feel the need or desire to improve these two dances. They usually state that they can "get by" in Fox Trot and Waltz, and besides, they don't enjoy them enough to want to spend the time and money to improve them. After they have become fairly proficient in the Latin dances, they usually decide that they would like to improve their American dances as well.

Another important point that should be injected here is that people prefer and enjoy those activities in which they excel. Whether it be golf, bowling, bridge, or dancing, as ability and skill increase so do interest and enthusiasm. Acquiring skill usually involves training. At the present time, anyone who takes the trouble to learn to dance finds so little opportunity to use his new skill that he becomes discouraged and usually decides

to look for a new hobby. Therefore the bands would most certainly be helping themselves by following this program of about one-quarter Latin, thus encouraging people who are taking lessons. This will lead to an upgrading of dance standards which will provide motivation for others to improve, and in improving they will discover how much more enjoyable dancing can be. Once started, the cycle could snowball into fantastic dance activity. I am convinced that sparking the biggest dance boom in this country has ever had is as simple as that.

I would be interested in hearing what others have to say in this matter.

DEAN CONSTANTINE,
Minneapolis, Minn.

Dear Editor:

I would like to report some facts about American Style Dancing. We haven't time to answer James McQueeny's article of August and September magazines but will do so at a later date as we just received the August-Sept. issue. Americans don't like to brag and boast about their style but we can do just that, if we are forced to do so.

On August 27th, 1960 on KABC—Channel 7 television the program "Let's Dance," Al Jarvis announced a contest between the best couple in English style waltz and the best couple in American style waltz, namely Dorothy and Reggie Butler, recently from England's contests and Penny Breen and George Ford, team of Jeff Jeffries, American style dancers. Reggie and his wife teach English style dancing evenings at Anaheim, California.

The three judges were well known show business personalities. Al Jarvis didn't designate which couple danced English or American style and I don't believe the judges knew the difference between the two styles of dancing. The American style team of Penny Breen and George Ford won a unanimous decision of the judges!

As the saying goes "One must suffer in order to be sympathetic." We are wondering if you have ever danced on a ballroom floor with a group of English dancers? If not, do so and you will understand why we *must not accept* the English style! The English zig zag all over the floor, first heading for the wall, then heading for the center of the floor, then stopping abruptly causing collisions with the other dancers who unexpectedly bump into them.

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Why should English style dancers be allowed a contest here in the U.S.A.? Does England allow us to have an American style contest in England? Definitely NO! We must learn English style to compete in England. Why not treat people or dancers as they will treat us?

Why not let the English dancers all dance and dress alike, while we Americans show our personality in our dancing and also our individuality in our dancing clothes? We like to be leaders—

not followers! Why should all dancers do the same pattern of steps and exactly alike? The American free style is so much prettier than England's style. Phil Jones of Stanford, Connecticut has been on Ed Sullivan's show (coast to coast) at three different times with his "All American Style School of Dancing." An English program would only be a repetition of the same steps.

Al Jarvis of "Let's Dance" used the word "sensational" when speaking of the teenagers of the Debonaire Dance School of Bakersfield, California. This school is taught by Virginia and Johnny Soiu with Jeff Jeffries doing the choreography. They as Al Jarvis stated "stopped the show" with their All American Style Dancing and of course won in every division. The teenagers group do precision American Waltz, precision Argentine Tango and rhyhtm American foxtrot. Along with this, they do their ballroom dancing. These same groups gave exhibitions at the Statler Hotel for the Dance Masters of America and were given a standing ovation! It's a great treat to watch free style dancers!

I realize the American teacher is lax in writing to magazines but believe me our American Style sells itself! We don't have to brag and boast about *just one contest*. We have many contests that don't get in print and probably *more couples* competing than the much publicized Pacifica Ball. I guess American teachers are so busy working at *teaching* they don't find time to brag and boast. We live in America—keep the Alex Moores in England!

Sincerely,

PENNY BREEN,
GEORGE FORD

2743 Waverly Dr.
Los Angeles 39, Calif.

Gordon Keith, Editor:

We have purposely put off writing to you because we have been waiting to include reactions from your last issue of Dance Digest. However, at this time, we of the Dance Masters of America Club No. 1 want to compliment you on your forthright 12 page expose on the ruinous competition by Recreation Departments and certain Public School Departments in their stepped-up program for free and service-charge dance lessons.

Your six year survey has caused many favorable comments among private enterprise dance teachers all over the nation. There are a very few dance teachers as yet not affected because of the tight reins on the local recreation departments by wise public officials. However, they have been alerted and will watch for any softening of policy by those controling Recreation activities and expenditures.

Already we have had many compliments on our letter that you published in its full text complaining about the National Recreation Committee's call for more teachers for more free dance leslons in the parks. We have had many requests for your 12 page supplement. Practically, every teacher wants 25 to 50 copies so they can circulate . . . Their local Mayor, City Council, all recreation officials, Chamber of Commerce and all public officials concerned with protecting the taxpayer's money.

Your plan to print these supplements in 100 to 500 lots for the different dance teacher organizations is very thoughtful and a great service to the dance teaching profession.

Our plan is to buy 300 copies on our first order for Dance Masters of America Club No. 1. Then the members can reimburse the club for their 2 5to 50 copies at 25c per copy.

Some one here estimated that you must have had $570.00 in out-of-pocket expenses to compile and print the 12 pages on Recreation Department activities. Then you followed with an intelligent report on pending State Legislation and licensing and/or bonding of all Dance Schools.

In my next letter to you, I expect to answer those who are and have been giving their support to writing in favor of free lessons in the parks. This must be stopped as soon as possible. We have some new developments on results.

Thank you kindly for all of the fine things you have been doing for the dance profession as a whole during the last ten years.

Dancingly yours,

CHARLEY BAKER
Immediate past-president
Dance Masters of America Club No. 1

EDITOR'S NOTE: *One of the editors of this magazine has known Mr. Baker for many years. However, we would like to go on record to explain that NEITHER THIS LETTER NOR ANY OTHER LETTER ever published in Dance Diwest was solicited—OR EVEN SUGGESTED. The editors believe that UNSOLICITED letters, either pro or con, more accurately reflect the writers' inner feelings. As a consequence their subject matter packs more feeling as well as makes for more interesting reading.*

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On June 26, 1960 Kathryn Etienne presented for the benefit of the "American National Theater & Academy" at the Hollywood Pilgrimage Bowl her ballet "The Twelve Dancing Princesses" with the Etienne Senior Dancers. The junior group will appear there on July 10 in her "La Chanson du Printemps" (The Spring Song).

Front: Pamela VARNEY, Barbara QUICK, Rochelle PYATT, Andree VIGEANT. Center: Sheri de-PORTER, Sharon STARLING, Sheila BRIIX, Diana CROCKETT, Edith PIPAN. Rear Row: Margueritte TALBOT, Dwight GRELL, Stella PIPAN, Olivia EASTRIDGE.

Teachers' and Students' section

OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS, NATIONAL ACADEMY OF BALLET

Seated: MARJORIE FAY UNDERHILL, Richmond, Va., Secretary; THALIA MARA, New York, N.Y., President; ARTHUR MAHONEY, New York, N.Y., Vice-President and Treasurer; Standing: LESTER MALLONEE, Charlotte, N.C.; JULIA MILDRED HARPER, Richmond, Va.; CONSTANCE REYNOLDS, Scranton, Pa.; Not Shown: VIOLETTE ARMAND, Detroit, Mich. Midwestern Representative; THOMAS ARMOUR, Miami, Fla. Southeastern Representative; LILLIAN CUSHING, Denver, Colo., Rocky Mountain Representative; OLGA ZICEVA, San Mateo, California, West Coast Representative.

The National Academy of Ballet held its annual summer school for teachers from July 11th through August 19th. The excellent attendance had an international flavor this year with teachers from Puerto Rico, Venezuela, Sweden, and Germany mingling with teachers from all the hard-working student body is most inspirational as these dedi-

cated teachers spend their days working at and discussing the fine points of ballet as an art and as a science. Unusual is the fact that there are no "sitters;" everyone works to the best of his ability.

The faculty included Thalia Mara, president of the Academy, Academic and Pointe Technique, and Pedagogy; Arthur Mahoney, Academic Technique, Supported Classical Adagio and Variations; Hilda Butsova, Pointe Technique and Variations; Yurek Lazowski, Character Dance and Variations; Marie Grimaldi, Pre-Ballet; Vladimir Djury, Music Theory.

At the annual meeting of the membership held on August 11th, Arthur Mahoney was re-elected to his post as Vice-president. Newly elected to membership by the Board of Directors in August are Peggo Cromer of Miami, Fla., Robert Hanlin of San Mateo, Calif., Charlotte Mady of Pittsburgh, Pa., Joan Winton of Oakland, Calif., and Joan Wolf of River Edge, N. J.

Michael Ford, Ballet and Tap teach- of Ashland, Oregon.

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THE CECCHETTI COUNCIL OF AMERICA

1960 Normal School and Seminar

The Cecchetti Council of America held their 1960 Student Normal School and Teachers' Seminar at the Park Shelton Hotel, Detroit, Michigan, July 6th through the 14th. The normal school was an inovation this year and proved most successful. Teachers and students attended from throughout the United States.

CECCHETTI teachers attending the seminar, members of the executive board and Laura Wilson and Ann Hutchinson.

The Council is proud to have brought Miss Laura Wilson of London, England as guest teacher of the Cecchetti method of classical ballet technique, mime and classical variations, to Detroit on her first visit to the United States. Several members of the Council have studied with Miss Wilson in London.

Miss Wilson is a Fellow and Senior Examiner of the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing, Cecchetti Society Branch and one of the principal teachers in London. She was a member of the Diaghileff Ballet and appeared with that company in Covent Garden. She has given lecture demonstrations and created choreography for operas and shows at the Lyric Theatre and is a former pupil of Maestro Cecchetti. The seven grades were presented with the revisions of the lower grades by Miss Wilson as well as authentic variations and mime.

Miss Nathalie Branitzka, another member of the faculty, was a pupil of A. Vaganova and L. Egorova, and a former soloist in the three greatest ballet companies, Diahileff, Pavlova and Monte Carlo Ballet Russe (original). Miss Branitzka teaches in her ballet school in New York City. The Council was most pleased with her excellent work both in the presentation of the technique and the variations. Both Miss Wilson and Miss Branitzka were in the Diaghileff Ballet at the same time.

Ann Hutchinson, a member of the faculty of the School of American Ballet, the Julliard School of Music and the high school of the performing Arts in New York City—specializes in the teaching of ballet and Labanotation. Miss Hutchinson, a member of the Cecchetti

Council of America, returned on popular demand, to teach Labanotation at the Normal school and the Seminar.

Again, this year, Joanna von Draginda of Detroit taught and presented her Ukrainian Folk Dances. She is instrumental in the organization of the Ukrainian Folk dance ensemble of Detroit (which includes a junior and senior division). Miss von Draginda has taught Ukrainian dancing to approximately 300 youngsters and has made appearances at International Festivals, cultural exhibitions, charity benefits and television programs featuring nationality cultures.

The faculty for the Cecchetti Normal School, other than the guest teachers, were chosen from the General Board members of the Council. Arita Lee Blair of Pennsylvania, Ruth Hanf and Viola Schoulin of Ohio, Jean Gloria Newall, Detroit, taught technique, point work, ballet and character dances. The graded work including revis--ions, point work, and children's dances were presented by the following executive board members: Sylvia Hamer, Gertrude Edwards Jory, Jane Caryl Miller, Marjorie Hassard, Enid Ricardeau, Theodore J. Smith and Virgiline Simmons. Throughout the seminar, the revisions of the grade work in Cecchetti technique were presented by Miss Wilson as well as the Board members. A reception was held on Sunday evening in the hotel Park Shelton. A delightful program was presented by the Junior Branch of the Cecchetti Council of America. The Detroit City Ballet entertained with numbers from their last presentation of Cinderella Ballet. Both Miss Wilson and Miss Branitzka highly complimented the work of the children and the Detroit City Ballet.

—Virgiline Simmons.

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Pictured above are Ron Daniels (assistant to Jack Stanly) and Steffi Fay (student of North Miami, Fla.) demonsrtating the "Stanly Trot" at the formal opening of the Jack Stanly school in Coral Gables, Florida on August 20, 1960.

BAKERSFIELD DEBONAIRES WIN BALLROOM DANCING GRAND CHAMPIONSHIP OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Teen-age dance contests, held weekly throughout the summer on the Al Jarvis Show in Los Angeles, reached a climax Sunday when the Grand Finals were held.

Ten couples, members of the Debonaire Dance Club and all trophy winners in previous contests, competed against 26 Southern California dance teams for top honors in the three divisions: Swing, Waltz and Cha-cha-cha.

The Debonaires almost made a clean sweep of the event, winning the waltz and cha-cha-cha finals plus the grand championship title. Two of the honors were won by the same couple, Janet Hilton and Harry Geyer, who besides winning the waltz contest, were also named "Teen-age Dance Champions of Southern California." Their prizes were large trophies and portable television sets.

Andrea Hackett and Richard St. Hilaire, grand winners in the Cha-cha-cha Division, also won trophies and portable television sets.

Left to right: Al Jarvis, Janet Hilton, Harry Geyer, Andrea Hackett, Richard St. Hilaire, Marilyn Jarvis.

Dance Caravan's teaching tour proved so successful that it will be repeated in 1961 with an increased teaching staff. Upper photo was taken during the Caravan's two-day session held at the Sir Francis Drake Hotel in San Francisco. Lower photo: One of the highlights of the tour was the impromptu show put on by the Caravan staff. Caught in the act are: Bob Kimble, Gertrude Hallenbeck, Danny Hoctor, Betty Byrd and Jules Stone.

-Photos by Bill Cogan

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You'll discover some interesting pointers to help you give a better performance the next time you are asked to give a talk—or perform a dance. (see page 14)

'Hey! You dance pretty good for a teacher.'

LEGAL NOTICE

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1. The names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are: Gordon Keith, 376 Almaden Avenue, San Jose 10, California.
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(Signed) GORDON KEITH, Publisher.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 28th day of September, 1960.

(Signed) ELMER K. COOKSEY, Notary Public

My Commission Expires July 10, 1964

BURIEN DANCERS—Students of Vicki and Mark Barton, from Burien and West Seattle recently demonstrated cha cha on the Gateway show, KOMO-TV, Channel 4, and also for the northwest teachers at their convention held at the Benjamin Franklin Hotel. This convention was sponsored by the Dance Educators of America, with headquarters in New York.

Penny Breen and George Ford (see Our Readers Write column) holding trophies won as Grand Waltz winners-1st place-at the Aragon Ballroom at Venice, California.

RECENT SMASH musical was that presented by the Bev El Studio of Theatre Arts. "Li'l Abner" was the title of this hit. Pictured here are Joe Nabriga, who portrayed Li'l Abner, being admired by Mammy Yokum, played by Rosemarie Bohm and Pappy Yokum, who was cleverly portrayed by Vernon Russell.

BALLET for TODAY

a series of installments
from
Nico Charisse's book titled:

(Part Four)

BALLET LEGS

In grateful appreciation for what my mother taught the eleven of us (my brothers, sisters and myself) I wish to credit her with the basic ideas that are the core of the theories to follow.

The expression "ballet legs" is too often misused by people who place all ballet dancers in the same category. Some girls are hereditarily muscular. When this is the case with a dancer, ballet is blamed. However, generally speaking, the ballet dancers with knotty muscles are from certain schools that insist on over repetition of a single movement. My mother's idea, which I verified with medical men before expressing myself to you, is that to avert bulging muscles one should rotatingly distribute the work to various muscles. Doctors were in accord that overworking the same muscles for too long a period of time will cause a "burn". They added that this overwork results in an inflamed condition of the muscle. Circulation of blood is not adequate enough to carry away the excessive accumulation of waste products such as lactic acid, piuruvic acid and carbon dioxide. The bulging is due to

swelling from the irritation of these by-products of muscle contraction.

We must endeavor to give *barre* work that may be called a "balanced diet" of movement. Our *barre* combinations take eight or sixteen bars combining *battement tendus, frappés, rond de jambes,* etc. By a series of varied motions, each group of muscles is given the opportunity to cool off while the others are in action.

TOE SHOES

Every now and then someone asks, "When should a child be put on toe shoes?" There are people, even authorities, who set a definite time as the safe age. I feel that it depends on the individual child. Not long ago I read in an excellent book on ballet that under no circumstances should a child be put on toe shoes before the age of ten. I respect the author's sincerity but there are some twelve- and fourteen-year-olds that I do not allow on toe even though they have studied the required length of time. There are others (very few) seven- and eight-year-olds whom I have recently put on toe. Needless to say that in such cases I use all the caution at my command.

Nature endows each of us with good qualities to capitalize on and weaknesses to overcome. Maturity of development cannot be predicted with absolute accuracy in animal or plant life. The farmer who declares that on a certain day of a certain month of each year he will harvest his crop is in for a big disappointment. He must contend with nature's vagaries concerning climatic conditions which cause either early or late crops. Nature and circumstances will cause one teen-ager to dream of romance and a Prince Charming, while another will be

scheming to use marriage as a stepping-stone to satisfy her lust for fame and money. A girl of this latter type is accepted and protected as a minor by society, as is her more innocent sister. The age of twenty-one is, therefore, not necessarily a sign of maturity but merely a legal expedient.

The physical equivalent to this problem is found in dance classes. There are little girls who hardly weigh more than a turkey but who have bones strong enough to carry more than their weight. There are others who are heavy-set and happen to have very small feet and bones. It is evident that the light girl with the strong feet should, with the proper training, be allowed to go on *pointes* sooner than the similarly trained heavier child with smaller feet and weaker bones.

The teacher's problem in America is many faceted. Competition among schools often tempts teachers to put children on toe sooner than they would otherwise deem it safe. In traveling across the country I have seen what could be termed "atrocities". Little girls of five, six and older, with bunions and wrecked arches due to teachers who are more interested in holding customers than in safeguarding the health of their pupils. I often find myself in a dilemma when an overambitious mother backs her daughter's unjustified pleas for toe shoes. At such times I try my best to dissuade them, not because the child is too young but because she and her mother do not realize that the bones, tendons and muscles have not yet been sufficiently developed to warrant toe slippers. To my regret I have at times stood firm only to discover later that the child was taken from me and put in the hands of a teacher who anxiously signed her up as a pupil in a toe class.

(to be continued)

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